

Community resources

[Follow us on Twitter](#) [Check our Reddit](#) [Twitter this](#) [Digg this page](#) [Contact us on IRC](#)

courage is contagious

Viewing cable 09BERLIN1548, GERMANY RENEWS CONSIDERATION OF GUANTANAMO

If you are new to these pages, please read an introduction on the [structure of a cable](#) as well as how to [discuss them](#) with others. See also the [FAQs](#)

Understanding cables

Every cable message consists of three parts:

- The top box shows each cables unique reference number, when and by whom it originally was sent, and what its initial classification was.
- The middle box contains the header information that is associated with the cable. It includes information about the receiver(s) as well as a general subject.
- The bottom box presents the body of the cable. The opening can contain a more specific subject, references to other cables ([browse by origin](#) to find them) or additional comment. This is followed by the main contents of the cable: a summary, a collection of specific topics and a comment section.

To understand the justification used for the classification of each cable, please use this [WikiSource](#) article as reference.

Discussing cables

If you find meaningful or important information in a cable, please link directly to its unique reference number. Linking to a specific paragraph in the body of a cable is also possible by copying the appropriate link (to be found at the paragraph symbol). Please mark messages for social networking services like Twitter with the hash tags **#cablegate** and a hash containing the reference ID e.g. **#09BERLIN1548**.

Reference ID	Created	Released	Classification	Origin
09BERLIN1548	2009-12-07 07:28	2011-08-30 01:44	CONFIDENTIAL//NOFORN	Embassy Berlin

Appears in these articles:

<http://www.spiegel.de>

VZCZCXYZ0000
PP RUEHWEB

DE RUEHRL #1548/01 3410728
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
P 070728Z DEC 09
FM AMEMBASSY BERLIN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5983

C O N F I D E N T I A L BERLIN 001548

NOFORN
SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT PLEASE PASS TO S/GC MICHAEL WILLIAMS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 12/07/2019
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [PTER](#) [GM](#)
SUBJECT: GERMANY RENEWS CONSIDERATION OF GUANTANAMO
DETAINEES FOR RESETTLEMENT

REF: A. STATE 50242
[1](#)B. BERLIN 600
[1](#)C. BERLIN 625

Classified By: Ambassador Philip D. Murphy for reasons 1.4 (b,d).

¶1. (C/NF) Summary: In separate December 1 meetings with Ambassador Dan Fried, Special Envoy for Closure of the Guantanamo Bay Detention Facility (S/GC), the Ministry of the Interior, Foreign Ministry and Chancellery expressed a willingness to consider seven new cases of Guantanamo detainees for resettlement as well as three cases that had already been provided to the former government last spring. All interlocutors stressed that the MOI is the competent ministry handling this issue. They also expressed the desire to be helpful in the spirit of the strong U.S.-German bilateral relationship. Interior Ministry State Secretary Beus said that any decision on the cases would likely take up to two months and agreed with S/E Fried on the following way forward:

- the Interior Ministry would be the only ministry addressing this issue, especially in regard to sharing information on the detainees;
- the U.S. and Germany will uphold strict confidentiality during this review phase and coordinate timing and content of any public messages;
- while Germany prefers non-Uighur cases because of expected tension with China, it will consider the cases of two Uighurs based on humanitarian grounds;
- Germany prefers to accept detainees with a connection to Germany, which S/E Fried explained to be the case with only one detainee, a Tunisian whose file was previously provided;
- the German MOI will maintain direct communication with S/GC at this stage in the process;
- Germany will decide on the need to interview any candidates at the end of its review process.

In a later meeting, Chancellery Security Advisor Christoph Heusgen stressed his confidence in Interior Minister Thomas de Maiziere to handle this issue, noting de Maiziere's close relationship with Chancellor Merkel. End summary.

Interior Ministry is Key

¶2. (C/NF) Based on a schedule recommended by the Chancellery, S/E Fried and Ambassador Murphy met first with Interior Ministry State Secretary Beus and expressed appreciation for the new government's willingness to consider resettling detainees. S/E Fried reviewed the numerous European countries which had accepted or pledged to resettle detainees at this point, noting that progress has been made but more is needed. He noted he would only be passing along detainee dossiers to the MOI and discussing case specifics with the MOI, and not with other Government ministries, per earlier requests from the government. S/E Fried handed over the dossiers of seven detainees: two Egyptians, two Syrians, a Libyan, and two Palestinians. He explained that if the MOI has questions or requires additional information, it can do so through established liaison channels and additionally offered for a German team to visit Guantanamo to conduct interviews with detainees under consideration. While recognizing Germany's preference for non-Uighur detainees, S/E Fried raised two Uighur cases for consideration based on humanitarian grounds, one who has psychological problems and the other, his brother, who serves as a caregiver. He also acknowledged the German interest in detainees who have some connection to Germany, noting the one Tunisian case whose file had been conveyed last spring as the single detainee with those ties to Germany. In total, S/E Fried requested that Germany consider 10 detainee cases for resettlement, three cases already conveyed and seven new cases.

¶3. (C/NF) State Secretary Beus expressed his ministry's willingness to consider all the cases, including the Uighurs, and said that his experts would review the files as soon as possible. Shortly after he began, Interior Minister Thomas de Maiziere dropped in to stress his desire to be of help. Continuing, Beus underlined the importance of keeping the current discussions and review of the detainees confidential, to which S/E Fried strongly agreed. Beus underlined Germany's preference for detainees who have some ties to Germany, noting that this connection would provide the

government with a "plausible" explanation for accepting certain detainees when faced with the argument that the U.S. should be resettling them. Beus said that he would be willing to consider the two Uighur cases on humanitarian grounds, but noted that they would present special difficulties because of the diplomatic row which would likely

ensue. Beus also highlighted that even if the federal government agrees to accept any detainees, it must then find a German state willing to accept them. He also said that German services would naturally keep an eye on any resettle detainees within reasonable resource means.

¶4. (C/NF) Beus also expressed strong interest in coordinating the timing and content of any public message on Germany's consideration of and decision on resettling detainees to prevent political pressure from those who oppose the move, but regardless the government will advocate in public in favor of taking detainees if they come to a positive decision. He added that being able to say to the public that the U.S. has also accepted detainees or otherwise explain why the U.S. is not doing so would also be helpful. S/E Fried expressed his readiness to coordinate and noted that the U.S. has admitted and plans to admit the more dangerous detainees for legal proceedings.

Process and Timeframe

¶5. (C/NF) Beus said that he and his experts would review the files and determine if additional information is needed. He agreed that additional information would go through intelligence channels and expressed his preference to communicate directly with S/E Fried on any matters at this stage of the process. He said that they would decide whether interviews are necessary when the experts have completed their review of the information. He estimated that a decision on taking detainees would take one-to-two months.

MFA Plays Peripheral Role

¶6. (C/NF) It was clear from the later meeting with MFA State Secretary Wolf Born that the Foreign Office would not be a major decision-maker as on this issue. S/E Fried reviewed in general terms the cases of detainees that we are asking the MOI to consider and also highlighted the humanitarian nature of the two Uighur cases, which Born noted. Born said that Foreign Minister Westerwelle wants to be "positive," but added that it is the MOI which is the "competent" ministry on this issue. Born mainly asked questions about the numbers of detainees still at Guantanamo, U.S. plans for addressing the various groups, and the possible closing date, all of which S/E Fried discussed with him.

Chancellery Confirms Reticence about Uighurs

¶7. (C/NF) In the last meeting, Chancellery Security and Foreign Policy Advisor Christoph Heusgen expressed appreciation that S/E Fried had proceeded along the lines that the MOI and Chancellery had requested through Ambassador Murphy. Heusgen appeared to be already fully briefed on S/E Fried's earlier meeting that day with Beus. He told S/E Fried that if Germany were to take any Uighurs, it would be best to do so in combination with other European countries to prevent China from focusing its opposition on any one country. Heusgen was not optimistic that China would demonstrate any understanding for the two humanitarian cases.

Heusgen inquired as to whether any alternatives for the Uighurs exists. S/E Fried explained possible options, while highlighting the difficulty of resettling the two individuals he is asking Germany to consider.

Comment

¶8. (C/NF) The new government, now in place since October 29,

appears willing to renew consideration of resettling GTMO detainees and has expressed a clear desire to be of help. In contrast to former Interior Minister Schaeuble, current MOI de Maiziere has not (and is unlikely to) flouted security concerns about cases in the press, nor indicated that Germany would be hardpressed to accept any detainees put forth for security reasons. Nor has de Maiziere indicated that the fact that the U.S. itself has not resettled detainees presents an insurmountable roadblock, although Beus indicated that U.S. resettlement would help Germany's PR efforts to resettle. All interlocutors expressed a strong interest in keeping the matter confidential and coordinating the timing and content of any public message. Beus projected sincerity and realism, noting that even if the federal government agrees, it must still identify a state that is willing to resettle the detainees. While all interlocutors did not outright reject the two Uighur cases, Heusgen made clear that the prospect of being the only European country to irritate China by accepting Uighurs would make it difficult, although

it is unclear whether Germany would take part in any broader European decision to resettle Uighurs.

19. (SBU) There has to date been no mention in the press of S/E Fried's visit.

10. (U) This cable has been cleared by S/E Dan Fried.
MURPHY